

**FUTURE FISHERIES IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
GRANT APPLICATION**

(please fill in the highlighted areas)

I. APPLICANT INFORMATION

- A. Applicant Name: Big Blackfoot Chapter of Trout Unlimited
- B. Mailing Address: PO Box 1
- C. City: Ovando State: MT Zip: 59854
- Telephone: 406-677-6454
- D. Contact Person: Rylen Neudecker
- Address if different from Applicant:
- City: State: Zip:
- Telephone:
- E. Landowner and/or Lessee Name
(if other than Applicant): Jerry & Susan Biresch
- Mailing Address: PO Box 23
- City: Lincoln State: MT Zip: 59632
- Telephone: 406.362.4634

II. PROJECT INFORMATION*

- A. Project Name: Willow Creek Fish Passage Improvement Project
- River, stream, or lake: Willow Creek
- Location: Township 13N Range 9W Section 2
- County: Lewis and Clark
- B. Purpose of Project:
The purpose of this project is to upgrade an undersized and perched culvert on Willow Creek that creates a barrier to fish passage during high flow periods and has created impairments to the channel.
- C. Brief Project Description:

Willow Creek is a 2nd order tributary to the upper Blackfoot River entering near river-mile 102.5 and supports genetically pure westslope cutthroat trout, and brown and brook trout. The property is protected under a perpetual conservation easement and was funded through Habitat Conservation Funds (HCP). This HCP-funded easement is intended to foster the conservation of native fish by preventing sub-division, development and other forms of habitat loss. This proposed project has been identified through the HCP assessment as a necessary habitat improvement to foster the recovery of native trout. The project will address an existing road crossing near stream mile 5.2 that is undersized and perched, creates a barrier to fish passage during high flow periods and has created impairments to the channel. This culvert is proposed to be replaced with an appropriately sized bridge following stream simulation guidelines and principles that will allow uninhibited aquatic organism passage and replicate the stream bed up and down stream of the crossing.

The proposed upgraded road crossing structure will result in a stable stream crossing that will correct the current road drainage problems, eliminate delivery of excessive sediment, provide for fish passage and restore the natural channel morphology to the site. A basic topographic and hydraulic field survey was conducted to locate key physical features within the area of the culvert replacement project site. Long profile, stream cross-sections, bank full widths, and general geomorphologic parameters were collected. The structure opening was sized based on stream characteristics collected from the reference reach and bank full measurements taken near each existing culvert. The hydraulic capacity of the structure was analyzed to ensure that it satisfies a 100-year flood event. Reference reach data collected indicated that bankfull width is close to 12 feet. To meet Stream Simulation guidelines, our new structure width will be 14 feet with a total length of 26 feet. Please refer to attached map, photo and design.

D. Length of stream or size of lake that will be treated:

Approximately 200' of Willow Creek will be treated, but it will provide access to the upper 3.5 miles of the stream.

E. Project Budget:

Grant Request (Dollars): \$ **11,000**

Contribution by Applicant (Dollars): \$ **2,570** In-kind \$ **2,000**
(salaries of government employees are not considered as matching contributions)

Contribution from other Sources (Dollars): \$ **5,000** In-kind \$ **\$6,950**
(attach verification - See page 2 budget template)

Total Project Cost: \$ **27,520**

F. Attach itemized (line item) budget – see template

G. Attach specific project plans, detailed sketches, plan views, photographs, maps, evidence of landowner consent, evidence of public support, and/or other information necessary to evaluate the merits of the project. If project involves water leasing or water salvage complete supplemental questionnaire (fwp.mt.gov/habitat/futurefisheries/supplement2.doc).

H. Attach land management and maintenance plans that will ensure protection of the reclaimed area.

III. PROJECT BENEFITS*

A. What species of fish will benefit from this project?:

Westslope cutthroat trout and brown trout.

B. How will the project protect or enhance wild fish habitat?:

Sections of Willow Creek, specifically upstream of the proposed culvert replacement site have ideal habitat conditions that support populations of native westslope cutthroat trout. We anticipate even greater use of this habitat once this project is completed as replacing this undersized culvert will enhance wild fish habitat by restoring connectivity and eliminating channel impairments and sediment inputs. As previously mentioned, this project is tied to the larger Habitat Conservation Program which entails a conservation easement with direct ties to restoration of native trout streams.

C. Will the project improve fish populations and/or fishing? To what extent?:

Yes, by providing off-site recruitment to the Blackfoot River and angling opportunities on-site. Willow Creek enters a portion of the Blackfoot River that receives high angling pressure.

D. Will the project increase public fishing opportunity for wild fish and, if so, how?:

Yes, by increasing wild trout habitat in the Blackfoot River drainage. The landowner is agreeable to allowing fishing access as well.

E. If the project requires maintenance, what is your time commitment to this project?:

The landowners have committed to signing a 20-year agreement. The proposed bridge is essentially a maintenance-free structures with a life expectancy estimated at 50 years.

F. What was the cause of habitat degradation in the area of this project and how will the project correct the cause?:

Already answered.

G. What public benefits will be realized from this project?:

This project involves the continuation of the Blackfoot River Restoration program with improvements to an important westslope cutthroat stream. Public benefits include: 1) recruitment of recreational fisheries to the Blackfoot River, 2) increasing the amount of fishable water, 3) improved water quality (sediment reductions) on-site and downstream, and 4) restoring a migratory corridor for a species of special concern.

H. Will the project interfere with water or property rights of adjacent landowners? (explain):

No

I. Will the project result in the development of commercial recreational use on the site?: (explain):

No

J. Is this project associated with the reclamation of past mining activity?:

No

Each approved project sponsor must enter into a written agreement with the Department specifying terms and duration of the project.

IV. AUTHORIZING STATEMENT

I (we) hereby declare that the information and all statements to this application are true, complete, and accurate to the best of my (our) knowledge and that the project or activity complies with rules of the Future Fisheries Improvement Program.

Applicant Signature:

Date:

Sponsor (if applicable):

***Highlighted boxes will automatically expand.**

**Mail To: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Habitat Protection Bureau
PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701**

Incomplete or late applications will be returned to applicant.

Applications may be rejected if this form is modified.

*****Applications may be submitted at anytime, but must be received by the Future Fisheries Program office in Helena before December 1 and June 1 of each year to be considered for the subsequent funding period.*****